THE PREFACE TO THE 1720 EDITION OF THE HYMNS OF ISAAC WATTS (1674–1748)

(We feel that in this year, when we are preparing for a celebration of Isaac Watts, readers may welcome a reprint of his celebrated Preface, from which only three paragraphs are omitted near the end.)

While we sing the praises of our God in His church, we are employed in that part of worship which of all others is the nearest akin to heaven; and it is pity that this, of all others, should be performed the worst upon earth. The Gospel brings us nearer to the heavenly state than all the former dispensations of God amongst men: And in these last days of the Gospel we are brought almost within sight of the kingdom of our Lord; yet we are very much unacquainted with the Songs of the New Jerusalem, and unpractised in the work of praise. To see the dull indifference, the negligent and the thoughtless air, that sits upon the faces of a whole assembly, while the Psalm is on their lips, might tempt even a charitable observer to suspect the fervency of inward religion; and it is much to be feared, that the minds of most of the worshippers are absent or unconcerned. Perhaps the modes of preaching in the best churches, still want some degrees of reformation; nor are the methods of prayer so perfect, as to stand in need of no correction or improvement: But of all our religious solemnities, Psalmody is the most unhappily managed: That very action which should elevate us to the most delightful and divine sensations, doth not only flatten our devotion, but too often awakes our regret, and touches all the springs of uneasiness within us.

I have been long convinced, that one great occasion of this evil arises from the matter and words to which we confine all our songs. Some of them are almost opposite to the spirit of
the Gospel: Many of them foreign to the state of the New Testament, and widely different from the present circumstances of Christians. Hence it comes to pass, that when spiritual affections are excited within us, and our souls are raised a little above this earth in the beginning of a Psalm, we are checked on a sudden in our ascent toward heaven, by some expressions that are most suited to the days of Carnal Ordinances and fit only to be sung in the Worldly Sanctuary. When we are just entering into an evangelic frame, by some of the glories of the Gospel presented in the brightest figures of Judaism, yet the very next line perhaps which the clerk parcels out unto us, hath something in it so extremely Jewish and cloudy, that darkens our sight of God the Saviour. Thus by keeping too close to David in the house of God, the vail of Moses is thrown over our hearts. While we are kindling into divine love by the meditations of the loving-kindness of God, and the multitude of his tender mercies; within a few verses, some dreadful curse against men is proposed to our lips; that God would add iniquity unto their iniquity, nor let them come into his righteousness, but blot them out of the book of the living. Psal. lxix, 26–28, which is so contrary to the new commandment of loving our enemies; and even under the Old Testament is best accounted for, by referring it to the spirit of prophetic vengeance. Some sentences of the Psalmist, that are expressive of the temper of our own hearts, and the circumstances of our lives, may compose our spirits to seriousness, and allure us to a sweet retirement within ourselves; but we meet with a following line, which so peculiarly belongs but to one action or hour of the life of David or of Asaph, that breaks off our song in the midst; and our consciences are affrighted, lest we should speak a falsehood unto God: Thus the powers of our souls are shocked on a sudden, and our spirits ruffled, before we have time to reflect that this may be sung only as a history of ancient saints; and, perhaps, in some instances, that salvo is hardly sufficient neither. Besides, it almost always spoils the devotion, by breaking the uniform thread of it: For while our pills and our hearts run on sweetly together, applying the words to our own case, there is something of divine delight in it; but at once we are forced to turn off the application abruptly, and our lips speak nothing but the heart of David. Thus our own hearts are as it were forbidden the pursuit of the song, and then the harmony and the worship grow dull of mere necessity.

Many ministers, and many private Christians, have long groaned under this inconvenience, and have wished, rather than attempted a reformation: At their importunate and repeated requests, I have for some years past devoted many hours of leisure to this service. Far be it from my thoughts to lay aside the book of Psalms in public worship; few can pretend to so great a value for them as myself: It is the most noble, most devotional and divine collection of poesy; and nothing can be supposed more proper to raise a pious soul to heaven, than some parts of that book; never was a piece of experimental divinity so nobly written, and so justly reverenced and admired: But it must be acknowledged still, that there are a thousand lines in it which were not made for a church in our days to assume as its own: There are also many deficiencies of light and glory, which our Lord Jesus, and his apostles have supplied in the writings of the New Testament: And with this advantage I have composed these Spiritual Songs, which are now presented to the world. Nor is the attempt vain-glorious or presuming; for in respect of clear evangelical knowledge, The least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than all the Jewish prophets, Matt. xi. 11.

Now let me give a short account of the following compositions. The greatest part of them are suited to the general state of the Gospel, and with the most common affairs of Christians: I hope here will be very few found but what may properly be used in a religious assembly, and not one of them but may well be adapted to some seasons either of private or public worship. The most frequent tempers and changes of our spirit and conditions of our life, are here copied, and the breathings of our piety expressed according to the variety of our passions, our love, our fear, our hope, our desire, our sorrow, our wonder, and our joy, as they are refined into devotion, and act under the influence and conduct of the blessed Spirit: all conversing with God the Father by the new and living way of access to the throne, even the person and the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ. To him also, even to the Lamb that was slain and now lives, I have addressed many a song; for thus doth the holy Scripture instruct and teach us to worship, in the various short patterns of Christian Psalmody described in the Revelations. I have avoided the more obscure and controverted points of Christianity, that we might all obey the direction of the word of God, and sing his praises with understanding, Psal. xlvii. 7. The contentions and distinguishing words of sects and parties are secluded, that whole assemblies might assist at the harmony, and different churches join in the same worship without offence.

If any expressions occur to the reader that savour of an opinion different from his own, yet he may observe, these are generally such as are capable of an extensive sense, and may be used with a considerable latitude. I think it is manifest, that what is provided for public singing, should give to sincere consciences as little disturbance as possible. However, where any unpleasing word is found, he that leads the worship may substitute a better; for (blessed be God) we are not confined to the words of any man in our public solemnities.
The whole book is written in four sorts of metre, and fitted to the most common tunes. I have seldom permitted a stop in the middle of a line, and seldom left the end of a line without one, to comport a little with the unhappy mixture of reading and singing, which cannot presently be reformed. The metaphors are generally sunk to the level of vulgar capacities. I have aimed at ease of numbers, and smoothness of sound, and endeavoured to make the sense plain and obvious. If the verse appears so gentle and flowing as to incur the censure of feebleness, I may honestly affirm, that sometimes it cost me labour to make it so. Some of the beauties of poesy are neglected, and some wilfully defaced; I have thrown out the lines that were too sonorous, and have given an allay to the verse, lest a more exalted turn of thought or language should darken or disturb the devotions of the weakest souls. But hence it comes to pass, that I have been forced to lay aside many Hymns after they were finished, and utterly exclude them from this volume, because of the bolder figures of speech that crowded themselves into the verse, and a more unconfined variety of numbers, which I could not easily restrain ... If the Lord, who inhabits the praises of Israel, shall refuse to smile upon this attempt for the reformation of psalmody amongst the churches, yet I humbly hope that his blessed Spirit will make these compositories useful to private Christians; and if they may but attain the honour of being esteemed pious meditations, to assist the devout and retired soul in the exercises of love, faith, and joy, it will be a valuable compensation of my labours: My heart shall rejoice at the notice of it, and my God shall receive the glory. This was my hope and vow in the first publication; and it is now my duty to acknowledge him, with thankfulness, how useful he has made these compositions already, to the comfort and edification of societies and of private persons: And upon the same grounds I have a better prospect, and a bigger hope of much more service to the church, by the large improvements of this edition, if the Lord who dwells in Zion shall favour it with his continued blessing.

VICTORIAN HYMN-COMPOSERS—I

SAMUEL SEBASTIAN WESLEY (concluded)

By Erik Routley

(Continued from the January issue. The numbers in brackets without initials refer to the Oxford Hymnal.)

(b) Harmony and Tonalities.—If Wesley was experimental in his use of melody, he was even more adventurous, and certainly more uniformly successful, in his use of harmony. Here again, he turned to good use the devices which in the
Another remarkable tune is atonement, set to "For all the saints" (127). It will have been observed already how fearlessly Wesley uses minor tonality, but it would have occurred to few composers to set this hymn in a minor key. Modern congregations are now accustomed to associating it with Vaughan Williams’s tune, which could not be improved on in its own line; there is also Stanford’s more ambitious tune in A.M., and of course Barnby’s trite and pedestrian St Philip. But although atonement looks uncompromising, it is worth trying, and brings out an aspect of the hymn which the other tunes naturally miss. The emphasis here is not on confidence and the military virtues, but on the awe with which one would contemplate the procession of the saints, as when the watchman in Revelation answers the angel, “Sir, thou knowest.” There is a remarkable piece of harmony in the first line at the penultimate chord. This chord is the kind of harmony which is perfectly justifiable when it is seen as resulting from the counterpoint of the parts; it is quite inevitable, and falls on a weak beat, and only a pedant would call it “sentimental.” For the rest, the tune is mainly diatonic, with a few accidentals marking obvious modulations and minor leading-notes. This chord therefore the second and final chords—would be a complete different tune without that A sharp.

Patmos (also mentioned earlier—236) has a strange chromaticism in the third line. We have already commented on the dominant ninth at the beginning of line 2; the chromatic chords in line 3 are really the result of a swift modulation from F through D minor to A minor and C; too swift, perhaps, for the limited space and manner in place in an anthem. The alto part suffers from the tortuousness of the tonality. But it is to be observed that until the last four chords Wesley denies himself any further chromaticism. He knew how to use this kind of thing sparingly.

Refuge (144 ii.) has a remarkable chord in the last line (second chord); there is a double suspension here which impairs the strength of the melody. But the chord is bold and interesting, and like all Wesley’s chromatic chords, implied by and not imposed on the structure of the melody. This tune suffers, as a matter of fact, from repeated notes and a rather over-sweet atmosphere. His other tune to the same hymn on the previous page (Reliance) is a different thing altogether—strong and firm, in G minor. Even here there are plenty of accidentals—but there is something more significant than these in the last line. It will be observed that in the sixth chord the tenor is divided, so that the chord is for the moment in five parts. Such a practice is almost always a sign of weakness; in Wesley’s case, as in anybody else’s, it makes it clear that he could not say all he had to say in four parts, and the sound rule is normally that what cannot be said in four parts in the normal hymn-tune is better left unsaid. Yet Walford Davies constantly filled-in his chords and often ends a tune with a chord in seven or eight parts. Filling-in indicates a feeling for chords in the “vertical” sense which can come dangerously near to a preoccupation. It is probably this preoccupation that damaged much of that beloved master’s music, and even with Wesley it looks like a miscalculation and an extravagance. Dykes’s Beattitude and Oakley’s Abends have “fill-in” notes which give away their lack of confidence in their harmony. But it does also indicate Wesley’s unusual feeling for chords, which made him the master of dramatic writing on a small scale that he was.

Glastonbury (141) has an independent organ part with fill-in notes for the first two lines; rude(268) has a fill-in third in the penultimate note, introduced in order to give a complete chord on the last note. It is a commonplace, of course, that if one obeys all the rules of four-part harmony-writing one cannot have both a third in the penultimate chord and a fifth in the final chord of a perfect cadence where the melody falls from the supertonic to the tonic, as so many hymn-tunes do. Bach avoids this by dropping his alto from the leading-note to the dominant; but what is not normally realized is that, for voices, the fifth in the final chord is quite unnecessary. A common chord with the fifth omitted sounds thin on the piano and often out of tune on the organ—and is therefore properly filled-in by the player. But the richer overtones of voices make the chord complete whether the fifth is actually sung or not. It is rather surprising to find Wesley writing fill-in notes to avoid this illusory incompleteness.

But the most remarkable instance of this is in Dies Irae (42), which is frankly an anthem rather than a hymn-tune—rising to a very high pitch and containing some dramatic modulations. Here the organist is invited in the sixth line to fill-in the chords by a temporary figured bass—surely unique in modern hymn-writing! This tune, however, lends itself readily to dramatic interpretation, and of its kind it is a very remarkable piece of music.

Wesley’s use of keys and modulation is also worth noticing. He is perfectly capable of writing a purely diatonic tune very effectively—for example, rude (268), or Ellingham (27), of which the former contains one accidental (a sharpened fourth) and the other none at all. Grace dieu (29), a magnificent tune in the grand style is tonally quite conventional. But he was capable of handling modulations very effectively, and of using bold changes of key without upsetting the tonality of the whole tune. Once or twice the modulation seems a little too heavy for the tune, but on many more occasions it is most effective. Winscott (26), a most inoffensive-looking tune, is redeemed from commonplace triteness by a sudden swerve
into the relative minor in the last line. It becomes an effective and bold tune (but the version at Rev.C.H. 338, also by Wesley, leaves out the modulation and thereby loses the effectiveness). Bury (19) has a modulation to the mediant major half-way through, and Glastonbury (141) goes to the submediant major at three-quarters. Seraphim, (A.M. 1939) 550, a rousing tune in G major to "Angel voices" swings straight into B major in the second line; it is inspiring, but the high D sharp must be difficult to get in tune, coming as it does so early and so suddenly.

Two forms of modulation are particularly common in Wesley’s tunes, and give to many of them an unmistakable “flavour.” They are the emphatic modulation to the subdominant and that to the mediant minor or major. Orisons (10) is so strangely moving because of its unusual tendency to slip into the subdominant in the first two lines; Atonement (127) goes emphatically to the subdominant of the relative major. Refuge (144) is in the subdominant before the end of the first line. Epworth (216), a rather dull tune, has the same modulation in the conventional place—the last quarter. But Brecknock (308, A.M. 777), one of his more celebrated tunes, owes much of its dramatic force to its emphasis on both the subdominant and the subdominant of the relative major (F minor and A flat major). Wrestling Jacob (162, A.M. 774, Rev.C.H. 416), on the other hand, moves to B minor from G major, and Cornwall (A.M. 191) has the same modulation in the key of D. But the most striking effects are given when the two modulations come together in the same tune. Gweedore (135) has found its way into several hymnals for the hymn “Author of life divine”; its third line moves from D major to F sharp minor, and the fourth swings the tune into G major. They are complete modulations, and the effect is that in six syllables you have moved from dominant to subdominant harmony. The prevailing impression is of dramatic restlessness, of course, and to correct it Wesley casts his first and last pairs of lines very firmly in the tonic. Nevertheless, the absence of any dominant major tonality (A major) leaves the tune a little inconclusive, and the result is one of the oddest pieces of tonality in hymnody outside the avowed modalists. The same effect, less successful and indeed almost impracticable, is seen in that strange tune Kensington (299) on which we have already commented. This tune is in D.M., C major. The last chord of the second line is E major (dominant of A minor), and the last of the second line F major, prepared by a flattened B. The whole of the third line is in A minor, again ending on an E major chord, and the composer feels bound to end the fourth line on the tonic chord in order to remind the hearer of the home-tonality. The transition from the second to the third line must be

extremely difficult for a congregation, involving not only the shifting tonality, but the singing of high F and low F sharp within four notes of melody. The rest of the tune is severely diatonic, but the general effect is incoherent and unmanageable. This is a case of a bold experiment that failed to achieve its object.

In one tune at any rate (Glastonbury, 141), the tonality remains ambiguous to the end. There is no doubt for the first two lines that the tune is in F, with a subdominant cadence, but misgivings appear during the next two lines, and by the end of the tune one discovers that it has been in fact in B flat; but this tune, designed to be sung once through only (to “Bread of the world”) is more of an anthem than a hymn-tune, and therefore best not judged by hymn-standards.

It will be seen that Wesley was bold in experiment, both in melody and in harmony; but it must not be thought that his music in general gives an impression of eccentricity. On the contrary, the prevailing impression is of fitness for its purpose and real craftsmanship. He cannot be identified by mannerisms or devices; he could be diatonic in a chromatic as the occasion demanded or require a dramatic or serene, bold or gentle, sweeping or compact. It will be well to consider finally some of his greatest tunes which show no particular eccentricity, but are examples of his work at its simplest and most direct.

Hereford (A.M. 698), which oddly enough was omitted from the Oxford Hymnal, is the perfect setting for “O Thou who camest from above”; it is written within the compass of an octave, and is a continuous, flowing melody with a perfect climax in the third line. No more shapely or delightful tune in the serene mood has ever been written, and it is remarkable that it has not been universally adopted by editors.

Equally fine in a different mood is Wigan (140), a splendidly solemn and shapely tune in an unusual metre. The words are not to everybody’s taste, and for this reason the tune is almost unknown. If Wesley had been writing a generation later he would probably not have hesitated to write minims instead of semibreves for the last note of line 3 and the first of line 4, a change of rhythm which would give the tune the flexibility it needs to make it quite perfect.

Another almost-unknown tune of Wesley’s, again most attractive in a quiet way, is Engedi (A.M. 492). This is in 8.6.8.86, again a metre in which few well-known hymns are written. But it is a great pity that “Dear Lord and Father of mankind” became wedded to Maker’s tune when there was this charming partner waiting for it.

Bolton (261) is another fine tune in an unusual metre—8.8.8.88, which might have been associated with Shuttleworth’s “Father of men” (S.P. 338) if editors had known their Wesley. Bath New (178) is a very useful D.S.M. in D minor,
which deserves attention; many of Wesley’s grandfather’s hymns were written in this metre. ST Michael New (E.H. 444) is another example of his felicity with odd metres, though here we cannot claim that he has achieved much inspiration. But it is a thousand pities that those tunes of his which have found their way into standard hymnals are among his dullest—Wesley could be dull—remembering his great output it is surprising that he was not dull more often—but our hymnals seem to have seized on his poorest specimens for the use of their congregations. Wetherry (R.C.H. 513, M.H.B. 217) is sound enough, but he wrote many a better C.M. Wimborne and Memoriam (159, R.C.H. 322) stand in the Church Hymnary, but how can its editors have thought either of those better than Time (32)? The Congregational Hymnary has Philadelphia (Cong.H. 500), which is a fine strong L.M. (though there set to the wrong hymn) and a poor thing called Hope (Cong.H. 676) besides Aurelia and Brecknock (the latter relegated to the Appendix). The Methodists have Faith (M.B.H. 10), which has already received adverse comment. Even Ancient and Modern, which does include Seraphim (A.M. 150), Engedi 492, Hornsey (499) and Hereford (698) shows little enterprise beyond these.\[\text{\textsuperscript{*}}\]

It is, in fact, high time that Wesley was attended to, and that a selection was made from his best tunes, not his worst. The following are the tunes which any new editor ought to have ready for use when a hymn turns up requiring a new tune. If he has these, he can afford to forget Aurelia.

GRACE DIVI (29) (with the first line reharmonized and the tonic pedal removed).

WIGAN (142).

HEREFORD (A.M. 698).

ORISONS (10).

ENGIDI (A.M. 492).

WINSCOTT (26).

TIME (32).

ATONEMENT (127).

RELIANCE (144 1).

HAREWOOD (3.P. 464).

CORNWALL (A.M. 195).

Added to these, of course, are many tunes which Wesley harmonized and arranged from other sources, and of which a good selection is given in the Oxford Hymnal.

As has been indicated, Wesley had his faults. He could be ponderous and dull; his melodies could sag and lose their way (as in that remarkable case, Alleluia (136), where an alternative melody note is given in the last line); but this one thing can be safely said, that his versatility and industry were matched with the craftsmanship of a real musician. A composer who could rise to the level of Hereford, and who could produce so many tunes of real soundness and so few of mere mediocrity, has an excellent claim to be called the most distinguished of Victorian church-musicians.

\[\text{\textquoteleft\textquoteleft THE STORY OF THE CHURCH'S SONG\textquoteright\textquoteright} \]

(By Millar Patrick, D.D.)

The first edition of our ex-Editor’s book on the history of Hymnody appeared in 1927, the year of the publication of the Revised Church Hymnary. Its object was, of course, to carry on the tradition already admirably laid down in the Church of Scotland by Messrs Cowan and Love and others, of making it possible for the singers of hymns to sing with understanding. It now appears in a second edition, published by the Church of Scotland’s Committee of Publications (121 George Street, Edinburgh 2); the price did not appear in my copy but it is clearly not an expensive book. It runs to 191 pages and it can be said at once that it is a joy to read. Everybody who loves hymns should have it.

It is a pleasure to be able to write in these unqualified terms of a book on this subject. There has been a tendency, of which we have been bound to take note in these pages, in books dealing with hymnology to sacrifice accuracy to picturesqueness and scholarship to popularity. In a very praiseworthy anxiety to make known to the common reader the background and history of the hymns he sings, not all authors are able to resist the temptation to quote on insufficient evidence and to by-pass the finer points of historical examination. Here we have a book whose author knows how to distinguish myth from history and who demonstrates in the process that history is not by any means less interesting than myth. The background to the hymns mentioned in the book is the background not so much of individual biography as of Church History in the strict sense. The book could almost be described as a history of the Church illustrated by hymns in the Church Hymnary. And quite incidentally the book shows what an admirable selection of the historic hymns of the church is available in that Hymnary.

We will give an example or two. In the early chapters we see the growth of hymnody out of controversy and persecution, out of the great crisis of the Church in the fifth century, and out of the later monastic movement. We are not told semi-apocryphal tales about the private lives of the authors;
it is the life of the Church in which we are invited to be interested. And yet how vividly the hymn “Art thou weary?” speaks to us when the facts of its origin in the melancholy monastery of Saba are known to us as given on pages 34-5. Topley, the author of “Rock of ages” is described in a few lines, and we know him when we have read them; but the Berrington Combe story is left severely alone. “Rock of ages” makes its message clear when it is seen against the background of the eighteenth-century English Church much more clearly than when it is confused with that romantic but dubious legend. The estimate of Newman (page 161) is an example of the generosity which the author succeeds in entirely clearing of sentimentality in his estimates of our hymn-writers.

Quotations could be multiplied. The fact is that this book is an excellent example of how the thing should be done. It is good history and good criticism, and a model as well as a source-book for those who would write similar books in the future.

We found, in fact, scarcely a detail which we could wish altered. We personally dissent rather wholeheartedly from the author’s estimate of Sullman’s “O gladsome light” (page 26); but that perhaps is a matter of opinion. On page 61 we believe that the date of the edict of John XXII should be not 1322 but 1325, according to the latest evidence. On page 66 there is a reference to the dactylic restlessness of Dei israel which is obscure. We should have liked to see a numerical index from the Church Hymnary to pages in this book, to make it easier for reference on particular occasions. And we should have liked to see a happier choice of type and format.

But in closing we emphasize again that this book is not only scholarly but wholly and even compellingly readable. The secret of that is, of course, that (unlike, we fear, many such books) this book is written in the kind of impeccable English which excludes both casualness and pedantry and inevitably “holds the reader.” Our Society will be forgiven for feeling a kind of proprietary interest in our late editor’s book: we can say with a whole heart that we are proud of it.

E. R. R.

“BLEST PAIR OF SIRENS”

(By Mollie Caird)

The Rev. A. W. Vallance writes in appreciation of this article which appeared in the October 1947 Bulletin, but he objects to Mrs Caird’s contention that “it may be safe to say that most hymns with refrains are bad hymns.” “It is not

safe,” he writes, “to imply that their badness is due to their having refrains... Many of the best ancient hymns, like the psalms, have repeated lines and refrains, cf. the ‘Benedicta’ and Psalm 115—136...” Further instance is given from modern hymnody are ADESTE FIDELES, “We plough the fields and scatter,” and those hymns which repeat “Hallelujah” at every line. “The danger,” he continues, “with refrain-hymns is that the refrain is an emotional outlet, and the careless writer may not rightly direct the emotion in his words. If the composer is equally careless we have a double cause for complaint.”

It is probably true that more good hymns than Mrs Caird suspects have been written with refrains. Several of Watts’s psalm-versions are thus written, notably that of Psalm 148, “Wide as His vast dominion lies,” and that of Psalm 136, “Give to our God immortal praise,” which has an ingenious alternating refrain. But it is probable that Mrs Caird, while conscious of this fact, is more painfully conscious of the vast corpus of poor hymns in the “Sankey” style which draw out their length in refrains which have neither grace nor meaning. One of our standard hymnals still in use collects into a group a number of hymns with refrains, including such pieces as “Onward, Christian soldiers,” “Hark, hark, my soul,” and “Mine eyes have seen the glory,” as well as a few choice “Sankeys.” This group supports strongly her contention, and it is no doubt her familiarity with that book which drew from her the statement that refrains are no recommendation. Mr Vallance’s contention is worth recording, however, for the sake of completeness.

DR W. T. WHITLEY


“Dr W. T. Whitley, who died on 16th December at the age of eighty-six, was one of the outstanding Free Church historians of his generation. He was the founder of the Baptist Historical Society and for twenty-seven years its indefatigable secretary and the editor of its Transactions. By enthusiastic and patient research, he accumulated the materials for many books and articles. Among his more important publications were an edition of the works of John Smyth, a Baptist Bibliography, and A History of British Baptists. The study of hymns and tunes greatly interested him. He took a leading part in the revision of the Baptist Church Hymnal, and in 1933 published a valuable book on Congregational Hymn-
singing. He was a man of many and varied interests, wide learning, strong convictions, and gracious Christian character.”

Mr F. J. Gillman adds to Dr Payne’s notice the following note about Dr Whitley’s connexion with our Society: “Dr Whitley was one of the founders of the Hymn Society, and until his health broke down was a regular attender at its conferences. At its autumn meeting at Cambridge in 1918 he delivered a lecture on ‘The Interaction of words and music in hymns,’ of which a summary appears in Bulletin No. 1.”

Dr Millar Patrick, writing to Mr Gillman, says that Dr Whitley was “a fine personality, a rare Christian, and a scholar of distinction in his chief field of interest.”

The biographical notice in the Baptist Times for 1st January 1948 adds the following biographical details:

“Dr Whitley emigrated to Victoria in early manhood and became the first Principal of the Baptist College there. He was for five years Lecturer at Queen’s College, Melbourne. He returned home in 1902, and held pastorates in Preston and Droitwich. In the last decade of the nineteenth century he won the Jay Gould prize for the best work on the Douay version of the Bible. He was a great music-lover, and did much valuable work for the Psalms and Hymns Trust.”

SOCIETY NOTES

Owing to an oversight, the usual envelopes implying demand for the 1948 subscription were not sent out with the January Bulletin. Members who have not paid their subscriptions are reminded of their obligation. Subscriptions should be sent to the Treasurer, W. Leslie Christie, Esq., W.S., 31 Queen Street, Edinburgh 2. The subscription is 5s. per annum. A statement of the Society’s accounts appears in this issue.

Members will hear with interest of the work of Mr R. F. Newton, who is at present conducting researches at Somerset House with a view to establishing biographical facts concerning hymn-writers and composers. He has already collected a good deal of information about many nineteenth- and early twentieth-century authors and composers of which he kindly places at the disposal of any who are interested. His address is R. F. Newton, Esq., Aldersbrook, Luctons Avenue, Buckhurst Hill, Essex. In the preparation of a “Companion” to the forthcoming Congregational Prayers the editor has already found Mr Newton’s researches most valuable.

In the recent New Year Honours, Miss Agnes Geddes Gilchrist, F.S.A., one of our most distinguished members, was awarded the O.B.E. “for services to folk-song music.” The Society rejoices with her in this unusual and richly deserved honour. Members will perhaps be aware that she made a considerable contribution towards the “Supplement” to the Handbook to the Church Hymnary. We are greatly delighted to see this honour awarded for a musical subject.

We hear from the Rev. H. J. Garland that, to celebrate the centenary of the composition of the hymn “There is a green hill,” which falls this year, he has prepared a paper on the history of copies of this hymn to members at the price of one shilling, and members may apply to him personally for this. His address is the Rev. H. J. Garland, the Methodist Manse, Millom, Cumberland.

Mr Bunn has now completed the index to the Bulletins, and a copy is in the Editor’s hands. This has been a very complex and laborious piece of work, and we are most grateful to Mr Bunn for doing us this valuable service. We hope that it may be possible a little later on to make the index more widely available.

Dr Patrick’s book, The History of the Church’s Song has recently appeared in a second edition, and a reference to it is made elsewhere in this issue. Perhaps it is proper to add here a word concerning Dr Patrick’s editorship of this journal, which passed into the hands of the present editor in January. Under his guidance the Bulletin has been started in a tradition of high scholarship, and the measure of that weight of learning is the measure of the responsibility which has now passed into our own hands. Furthermore, it was the Bulletin which kept the Society together during the years of war when Conferences were impossible and contact between members very difficult. It has been his spirit that has done more than any other to keep the Society alive when any flagging in that quarter might have been disastrous to the Society which was born in the unpropitious year 1918. We are all more grateful to Dr Patrick than we can well express here; and we are delighted—most of all the present editor—that although at his request his name has disappeared from our title-page, his interest and guidance are still as much at our disposal as ever. We are now looking forward very keenly to the publication of his book on Scottish Psalmody, which is expected in two years’ time, to celebrate the tercentenary of the Scottish Psalter.

TREASURER’S REPORT

The Treasurer’s Accounts for 1947 have now been audited by Mr J. C. S. Brough. They show that the Society’s income from subscriptions, donations and interest amounted to £38:4:9 and the expenditure was £56:10:2 (of which the printer’s bills absorbed £36:10). The balance on hand at the end of the year including sums invested in bank was £68:2:11; and in addition a sum of £56:11:11 is held for a new edition of Julian’s Dictionary or similar publication. It will be observed that notwithstanding the increase in the subscription income has been slightly overspent, a disappointing result in a year when no Conference was held, or Occasional Paper issued.

Envelopes accompany this Bulletin and those members who have not paid their subscriptions for 1948 are requested to remit the same to the Treasurer.
THE SUMMER CONFERENCE

The Conference will be held at Mansfield College from tea-time on Monday, 12th July, to lunch-time, Thursday, 15th July. A few vacancies remain for accommodation within the College, but this is strictly limited. Application for them should be made in good time. The charge for full board in College will be £2, 8s. for the three days.

It will be possible, however, for the College to supply meals for a larger number than can be accommodated for sleeping. Those who fail to secure full accommodation, therefore, can, if they choose, book bed and breakfast at a hotel and take their meals at the College. Particulars of possible arrangements can be obtained from the Editor.

A rough outline of a proposed programme (completely subject to alteration, of course), is as follows:

Monday after Tea: Reports and informal discussion.

Evening: Public singing of hymns by Watts in the College Chapel.

Tuesday Morning: Business (break at 11).


Evening: Lecture.

Wednesday Morning: Business followed by discussion.

After Tea: Discussion, opened by Canon Briggs—“Editorial Alterations.”


Thursday Morning (if necessary): Business.

The Public activities of the Society—that is, the Lectures and the Hymn-singing, will be widely advertised in the city and university. It is hoped that these will attract not a few who have not before had touch with the Society. (The College Chapel seats four hundred, and there is no reason why it should not be well filled.)

Business.—Considerable time has been left for private business, which must include some plans concerning Julian and some suggestions for further activity by the Society. Time that is not occupied by business can easily be used profitably in discussion of important general topics.

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